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ABSTRACT

An analysis was made of the professional and psycho-social characteristics of 24 Wisconsin women who held management positions in the leisure services field. Comparisons were made between these managers and other women employed in leisure services, but the major focus was in delineating the uniqueness of these women managers and comparing how they are like or unlike female managers in other professions. A portion of the study analyzed the subjects' personality characteristics and how subjects perceived their own personality in contrast to what is culturally defined as stereotypically feminine or masculine. Respondents also provided information on reasons for choosing leisure services as a career, future goals, work satisfaction, and management of personal and professional lives. They were also asked whether or not they were influenced by female role models. Results indicated that they were not much different from other women employed in leisure services in general, although they tended to possess somewhat more "masculine" traits and were more nontraditional in their sex role views. (JD)

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Women in Leisure Services: The Wisconsin Data

Women as managers have received a great deal of "press" in the past ten years. THE MANAGERIAL WOMAN (Hennig and Jardim 1976), GAMES MOTHER NEVER TAUGHT ME (Harragon 1977), and others have described the "new woman" as she struggles to survive in the world of management, particularly business management.

Based on the research undertaken in a number of fields, it is clear that women in administrative positions face both success and failure every day. Those who have jumped color, ethnic, or sex barriers to enter a profession find that success is difficult because they have not shared the same worlds as their male colleagues and can not count on the same assistance that people from the same backgrounds informally offer to one another. Further, the definition of success is often based on the male stereotype (i.e. aggressive, competitive, firm, just, without expression of emotion) (O'Leary 1974). Since it has been argued that the characteristics of women workers are discrepant from the predominantly "masculine" criteria inherent in the male managerial model, it is reasonable to anticipate that such attitudes may constitute barriers to higher occupational attainment for women.

Other attitudinal barriers may interact to inhibit women workers from engaging in the kinds of achievement-directed behavior necessary to insure promotion. Societal sex role stereotypes and attitudes toward the competency of women (external) as well as internal factors such as fear of failure, low self-esteem, and role conflict all create perceived consequences for engaging in achievement-related behaviors (O'Leary 1974). Many times women are caught in a double bind, unable to optimally fulfill the role requirement for a more socially desirable achieving individual and those for the ideal woman simultaneously. To the extent that a woman's self-esteem incorporates traditionally feminine stereotypic notions, it is plausible to anticipate that these women will be hesitant to engage in behavior requiring characteristics societally typified as male sex role appropriate.

Whether or not these dilemmas exist for women administrators in leisure services, it appears that women are beginning to become more noticed as administrators and managers in the field of leisure services.

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Whether the number of women in leisure service management has actually increased over the past twenty years is really not certain. Hudson (1982) suggests women are still poorly represented in leisure management positions. Theobald found in Canada in 1978 that there were 66% more male administrators than female administrators. Kerr (1975) found that only 15% of the administrators in recreation were women and they earned on the average $1,717 less than male administrators. Dunn (1977) similarly found that only 10% of the administrative positions in public recreation were filled by women. In the most recent study by Henderson and Bialeschki (1981), it was found that in Wisconsin women held only 20% of the administrative positions in leisure services.

The purpose of this paper is to describe some of the information obtained about women in management positions in leisure services in Wisconsin. The data were obtained from mailed questionnaires sent to a randomly selected group of women employed in leisure services during the winter of 1982. The focus of this analysis will be the 24 women who identified themselves as managers. Some comparisons will be made between them and other women employed in leisure services, but the major focus will be in delineating the uniqueness of these women managers and comparing how they are like or unlike female managers in other professions.

The Sample

Of the 24 women managers in leisure services, 13% were employed in therapeutic recreation, 29% in community or school recreation, 13% in parks/outdoor recreation, and another 29% in youth-serving, voluntary associations. The remainder were employed in miscellaneous areas of leisure services such as college unions, industrial recreation, etc. The administrators had been employed in their present position for an average of almost 5 years, but had been employed in leisure services for over eight years. The span of years employed in leisure services ranged from 1 to 31 years. Over a third of the women were under age 30 with 20% over 40 years. The average age of the women was 35.7 years which was several years older than women employed in other levels of leisure services. Forty-two percent of the women were married and 50% were single. Seventy-one percent of the women had NO children living at home. Only two women in the entire group did not have an least a bachelor's degree.

Of those women who were in management positions, an average of three full-time staff were supervised although it was interesting to note that 42% of the women said they did not supervise any fulltime staff. An average of 19 part-time staff were supervised by these women with a median of 13 parttime employees.

The administrators were not very involved with professional associations. Only 8% were members of NRPA, 25%

members of WPRA, 8% members of AAHPERD, 13% of WAHPER. Almost half (46%) were not involved in any professional associations at all. The women were asked what barriers they experienced in seeking continuing professional education. One-third of the women said the cost was a factor, one-fourth said they lacked information about training opportunities, one-fifth said home responsibilities kept them from participating, over a third said they did not have enough time, and another one fifth had schedule conflicts. Three-fourths of the women felt it was important to have the opportunity to share professionally with other women employed in similar types of positions.

Psycho-Social Characteristics

Personality characteristics were one of the social psychological areas which received some attention in this study. The Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem 1981) was used to identify the tendency toward masculine, feminine, and androgynous personality traits. The concept of psychological androgyny suggests that masculinity and femininity within a single individual can be integrated. The concept suggests that it is possible for an individual to be both assertive and compassionate, instrumental and expressive, masculine and feminine, depending upon the situational appropriateness of these various modalities (Bem 1977). This portion of the study was used to ascertain how women in leisure services perceived their own personality in contrast to what is culturally defined as stereotypic feminine and masculine. Since management promotion has been based upon a male model with theorists suggesting that women who possess masculine attributes may achieve success more readily, it was thought that relationships might exist between the androgyny scores and the holding of management positions. The Bem Sex Role Inventory consists of items which reflect perceived personality traits. These traits are then classified as masculine or feminine based upon cultural definitions of sex role stereotypes.

When the managers were analyzed on this scale, it was found that 21% were classified masculine, 21% feminine, 29% undifferentiated, and 29% androgynous. It was most evident that these managers could not be classified in any stereotypic way based on this scale. Further, no significant differences existed between the managers and women employed in other levels of leisure services.

When individual items were analyzed on the scale, it was interesting to note the areas where differences existed between the managers and other women in leisure services. The managers perceived themselves by scoring lower than the other women in leisure services in the following areas: yielding, moody, shy, unpredictable, secretive, dominant, gullible, individualistic, masculine, childlike, and gentle than the average of the group. The managers also rated themselves as being more conscientious, theatrical, feminine, analytical, having leadership abilities, willing to take risks, sincere, soft-spoken, acting like a

leader, competitive, and ambitious than women in other areas of leisure services. The managers were responding with stronger masculine characteristics overall although there was not a great deal of difference between these managers and other leisure service professionals.

Another scale was used to view sex role socialization. This related to traditional verses nontraditional sex role ideas. The sex role orientation refers to an individual's perception of appropriateness of behaviors of men and women as it relates to socially presented roles. These roles might include attitudes about the division of labor, sex based power structure, employment of women, the political status of women, and the appropriate sex role socialization of males and females. The scale designed by Brogan and Kutner (1976) was used to assess the attitudes of these female professionals in leisure services.

The managers in this studied scored 160 which tended to indicate the managers were slightly more non-traditional in their views than otner women in leisure services (overall aaverage=159). No statisitcally significant differences were found in regard to tne sex role orientation and the level of position. Table 1 indicates the scores on some of the sex role orientation items as compared to the sample of leisure service professionals in general. Some additional questions were asked to ascertain attitudes about leisure services specifically. In general, great agreement existed, but the managers were slightly more non- traditional in their views than women in other job levels in leisure services.

Qualitative Data about Managers

A number of questions were asked by seeking an open response. The statements made provided additional understanding regarding the challenges faced by women managers in leisure services.

The reasons which the women gave for their careers in leisure services provided a stereotypic "feminine" basis. Forty-six percent of the women indicated that they enjoyed working with people while another 16% indicated that their career was meaningful to them. Four women said they were just lucky or happened to fall into the job while others suggested they had always been committed to the career because of childhood experiences.

Related to these career choices, the women were also asked what their future goals were. Interestingly enough, almost 30% indicated they wanted to go to a better job in a larger agency or department. Sixteen percent wanted a further degree while that same percentage indicated they wanted to be more effective in their present job. Eight percent indicated that higher pay was a

career goal. Two of the women had retirement as a career goal while two women also indicated that personal plans (ie child-rearing) were the focus of their career. The goals were quite diverse. In general, the women were not into the "get ahead" mentality which is traditionally associated with women in management.

Did the women managers in leisure services have trouble juggling their personal and professional lives? About 20% said they had no problems. Of the majority who said they had problems, 41% indicated that time was the critical problem. This related to working overtime, the job never ending, and not enough personal time and/or time for family and friends. Other problems which were mentioned included bringing problems home, securing adequate childcare, and making career decisions.

Lastly, the women managers were asked if they had had female role models who were visible in their careers. Over half of the women said they had not had such role models. However, of those who had had role models, their descriptions of the women seemed to represent an admiration for stereotypic masculine traits such as: management skills, financial management savvy, knowledge and intelligence, strength, self-confidence, dedication, decisiveness, versatility, organization, efficiency, self-starter. Other more nurturing traits were also mentioned: involved in community, fun-loving, sense of humor, able to handle people, poised, fair, articulate, "feeling", enthusiastic.

Conclusions

Several conclusions can be drawn about the managers who constituted this sample of female leisure service professionals in Wisconsin. They were in many ways not that much different than women employed in leisure services in general, although they tended to possess somewhat more stereotypically masculine traits and were more non- traditional in their sex role views. However, their overall androgynous personalities and expectations would suggest, as Bem has described, that they may be psychologically more mature and able to perform well in a number of situations. This androgynous blend may make for the best managers--people who are "strong" and yet "sensitive".

Frequently our profession is criticized for not providing upward mobility for women. However, it did not appear that these women managers were very concerned about this in general. Perhaps the concept of success needs to be rethought in relation to the roles in which women in leisure services perceive themselves. The same work worlds may not exist for men and women in leisure services, although we can not draw that conclusion based on this single sex study. Even though the characteristics of the goals for women may be discrepent from those of men, it does not mean that they are less important.

The traditional external and internal factors which affect women in their achievement-directed behavior did not appear strong in this research. Women seemed to believe that they could be effective managers. Their personality traits were spread across all stereotypic dimensions. This view, however, was not consistent with their views of role models suggesting that some conflict may exist. It was very clear that personal concerns were an important element in the lives of women. The literature suggests these concerns may create problems for managers. This idea may likely be true, although it was not strongly acknowledged by the women in this study.

As a profession, several things might be considered which would make the roles of women in the management of leisure services easier:

Opportunities should be provided for women to interact with other women who are in similar jobs in the profession.

Both masculine and feminine traits should be encouraged in the development of female managers.

Career planning should be encouraged among women who decide to stay in the area of leisure services.

It is useful to begin to explore these issues. Understanding how the problems women face in the field of leisure services relates to working women in the larger society is important as steps are taken to provide women with the kind of training and encouragement to achieve both personal and professional goals.

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Table 1
Selected Sex-Role Orientation Responses of Women Employed in Leisure Services

Item	$\bar{X}$(n=70)	Manager's $\bar{X}$(n=24)
It is more important for a wife to help her husband's career than to have a career herself.	1.74	1.66
The idea of young girls participating in Little League baseball competition is ridiculous.	1.63	1.63
The old saying that "a woman's place is in the home" is still basically true and should remain true.	1.43	1.3
A woman whose job involves contact with the public, e.g., recreation leader or teacher, should not continue to work when she is noticeably pregnant.	1.3	1.17
A woman should not accept a career promotion if it would require her family to move and her husband to find another job.	2.26	2.4
Unless it is economically necessary, married women who have preschool-age children should not work outside the home.	2.58	2.46
A husband should not feel uncomfortable is his wife earns a larger salary than he does.	4.37	4.42
It is certainly acceptable for boys, as well as girls, to play with dolls.	4.2	4.04
Women should not feel inhibited about competing in any form of athletics.	4.5	4.62
Women should be able to compete with men for jobs than have traditionally belonger to men, such as recreation administrators.	4.83	4.8
It is not a good idea for a husband to stay home and care for the children while his wife is employed full-time outside the home.	1.75	1.67
Overall, women usually have more available leisure time than do men.	1.99	2.0
Women should expect to reach the same salary levels as males.	4.49	4.63

1 = strongly disagree
5 = strongly agree